

Chapter 1

Facing Today's Communication Challenges

Essentials of Business Communication, Asian Edition

Communication Skills

Why do you need good communication skills?

Communication Skills

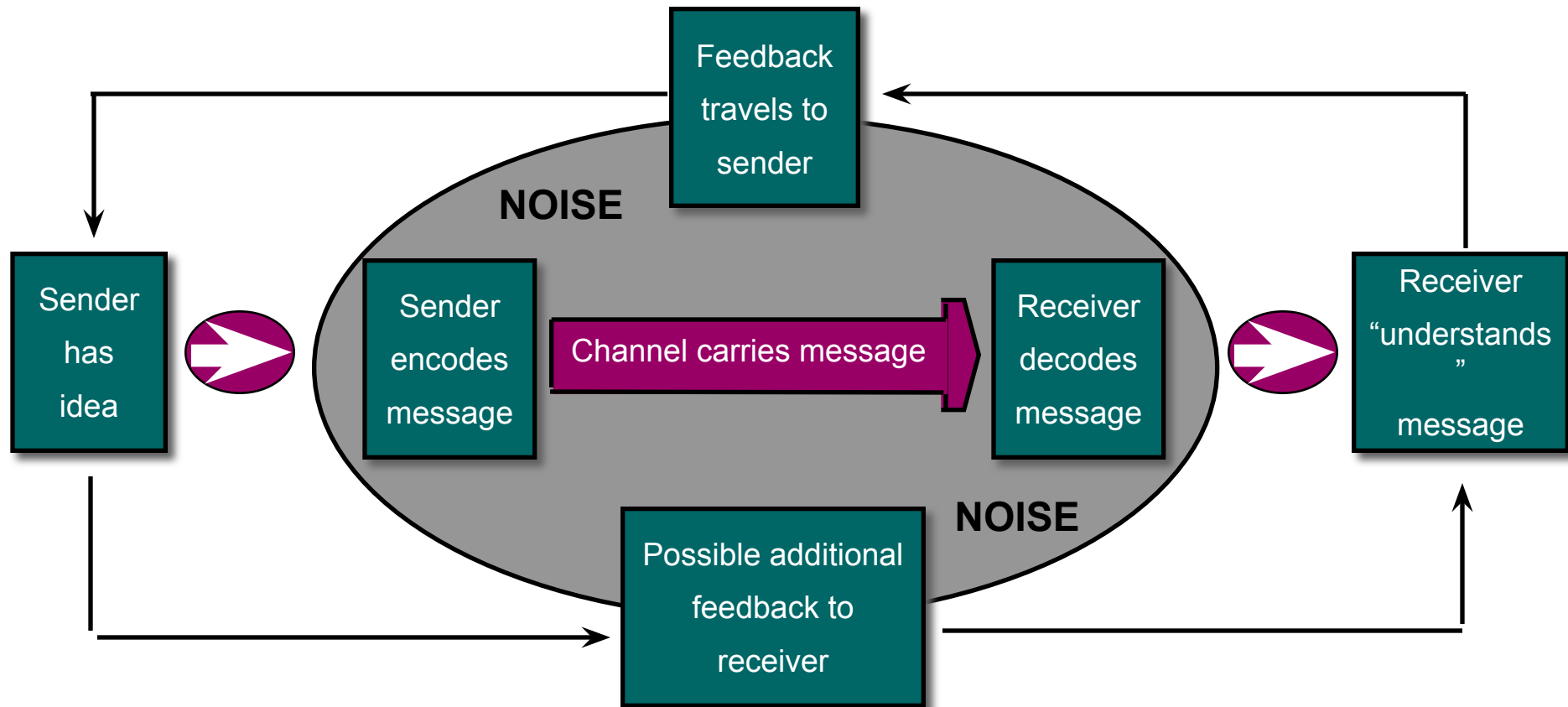
Communication skills are essential for

- **Job placement**
- **Job performance**
- **Career advancement**
- **Success in the new world of work**

Trends in the New Workplace

- **Flattened management hierarchies**
- **More participatory management**
- **Increased emphasis on teams**
- **Heightened global competition**
- **Innovative communication technologies**
- **New work environments**
- **Focus on information as a corporate asset**

The Process of Communication



The Process of Communication

How may the sender encode a message?

Verbally or nonverbally. By speaking, writing, gesturing.

What kinds of channels carry messages?

Letters, e-mail, memos, TV, telephone, voice, body. Others?

How does a receiver decode a message?

Hearing, reading, observing.

When is communication successful?

When a message is understood as the sender intended it to be.

How can a communicator provide for feedback?

Ask questions, watch responses, don't dominate the exchange.

Barriers to Effective Listening

- **Physical barriers—hearing disabilities, noisy surroundings**
- **Psychological barriers—tuning out ideas that counter our values**
- **Language problems—unfamiliar or charged words**
- **Nonverbal distractions—clothing, mannerisms, appearance**

Barriers to Effective Listening

- **Thought speed**—our minds process thoughts faster than speakers express them
- **Faking attention**—pretending to listen
- **Grandstanding**—talking all the time or listening only for the next pause

Ten Misconceptions About Listening

- **Listening is a matter of intelligence.**
 - **Fact: Careful listening is a learned behavior.**
- **Speaking is more important than listening in the communication process.**
 - **Fact: Speaking and listening are equally important.**

Ten Misconceptions About Listening

- **Listening is easy and requires little energy.**
 - **Fact:** Active listeners undergo the same physiological changes as a person jogging.
- **Listening and hearing are the same process.**
 - **Fact:** Listening is a conscious, selective process. Hearing is an involuntary act.

Ten Misconceptions About Listening

- **Speakers are able to command listening.**
 - **Fact:** Speakers cannot make a person actually listen.
- **Hearing ability determines listening ability.**
 - **Fact:** Listening happens mentally—between the ears.

Ten Misconceptions About Listening

- **Speakers are totally responsible for communication success.**
 - **Fact: Communication is a two-way street.**
- **Listening is only a matter of understanding a speaker's words.**
 - **Fact: Nonverbal signals also help listeners gain understanding.**

Ten Misconceptions About Listening

- **Daily practice eliminates the need for listening training.**
 - **Fact:** Without effective listening training, most practice merely reinforces negative behaviors.
- **Competence in listening develops naturally.**
 - **Fact:** Untrained people listen at only 25 percent efficiency.

Tips for Becoming an Active Listener

- **Stop talking.**
- **Control your surroundings.**
- **Establish a receptive mind-set.**
- **Listen for main points.**
- **Capitalize on lag time.**
- **Listen between the lines.**

Tips for Becoming an Active Listener

- **Judge ideas, not appearances.**
- **Hold your fire.**
- **Take selective notes.**
- **Provide feedback.**

Nonverbal Communication

- **The eyes, face, and body send silent messages.**
 - Eye contact
 - Facial expression
 - Posture and gestures
- **Appearance sends silent messages.**
 - Appearance of business documents
 - Appearance of people

Nonverbal Communication

- **Time, space, and territory send silent messages.**
 - **Time (punctuality and structure of)**
 - **Space (arrangement of objects in)**
 - **Territory (privacy zones)**

Tips for Improving Your Nonverbal Skills

- **Establish and maintain eye contact.**
- **Use posture to show interest.**
- **Improve your decoding skills.**
- **Probe for more information.**
- **Avoid assigning nonverbal meanings out of context.**

Tips for Improving Your Nonverbal Skills

- **Associate with people from diverse cultures.**
- **Appreciate the power of appearance.**
- **Observe yourself on videotape.**
- **Enlist friends and family.**

Culture and Communication

Good communication demands special sensitivity and skills when communicators are from different cultures.

Culture and Communication

Key North American Beliefs:

- **Individualism**
Initiative, self-assertion, personal achievement
- **Informality**
Little emphasis on rituals, ceremonies, rank; preference for informal dress
- **Direct communication style**
Impatient, literal, suspicious of evasiveness
- **Importance of time**
Precious, correlates with productivity

Comparing U.S. and Foreigner's Views

U.S Persons' Views of Themselves

Informal, friendly, casual

Egalitarian

Direct, aggressive

Efficient

Goal/achievement-oriented

Foreigners' Views of U.S. Persons

Undisciplined, overly personal

Insensitive to status

Blunt, rude, oppressive

Obsessed with time;
opportunistic

Promise more than they deliver

Comparing U.S. and Foreigner's Views

U.S Persons' Views of Themselves

Profit-oriented

Resourceful, ingenious

Individualistic,
progressive

Dynamic, find identity in
work

Enthusiastic, prefer hard-
sell

Open

Foreigners' Views of U.S. Persons

Materialistic

Work-oriented; deals more
important than people

Self-absorbed, equating
“new” with “best”

Driven

Deceptive, fearsome

Weak, untrustworthy

Proverbs Reflect Culture

What do these proverbs indicate about this culture and what it values?

U.S Proverbs

“The squeaking wheel gets the grease.”

“Waste not, want not.”

“He who holds the gold makes the rules.”

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.”

“The early bird gets the worm.”

Proverbs Reflect Culture

What do these proverbs indicate about this culture and what it values?

Chinese Proverbs

“A man who waits for a roast duck to fly into his mouth must wait a very, very long time.”

“A man who says it cannot be done should not interrupt a man doing it.”

“Give a man a fish, and he will live for a day; give him a net, and he will live for a lifetime.”

Proverbs Reflect Culture

What do these proverbs indicate about these cultures and what they value?

“No one is either rich or poor who has not helped himself to be so.” (German)

“Words do not make flour.” (Italian)

“The nail that sticks up gets pounded down.” (Japanese)

High-Context and Low-Context Cultures

High Context

Japanese

Arab

Latin American

Spanish

English

Italian

French

North American

Scandinavian

German

Swiss

Low Context

High-Context and Low-Context Cultures

High-Context Cultures

- Relational
- Collectivist
- Intuitive
- Contemplative

Low-Context Cultures

- Linear
- Individualistic
- Logical
- Action-oriented

Improving Communication With Multicultural Audiences

- **Oral Messages**
 - **Learn foreign phrases.**
 - **Use simple English.**
 - **Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.**
 - **Observe eye messages.**
 - **Encourage accurate feedback.**
 - **Check frequently for comprehension.**

Improving Communication With Multicultural Audiences

Oral Messages (continued)

- **Accept blame.**
- **Listen without interrupting.**
- **Remember to smile!**
- **Follow up in writing.**

Improving Communication With Multicultural Audiences

- **Written Messages**
 - **Adapt to local formats.**
 - **Use short sentences and short paragraphs.**
 - **Avoid ambiguous expressions.**
 - **Strive for clarity.**
 - **Use correct grammar.**
 - **Cite numbers carefully.**

Effective Communication With Diverse Workplace Audiences

- Understand the value of differences.
- Don't expect total conformity.
- Create zero tolerance for bias and stereotypes.
- Practice focused, thoughtful, and open-minded listening.
- Invite, use, and give feedback.

Effective Communication With Diverse Workplace Audiences

- **Make fewer workplace assumptions.**
- **Learn about your own cultural self.**
- **Learn about other cultures and identity groups.**
- **Seek common ground.**

End

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